

I Can Wait by OnlyHope39

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Summary:

Mike shows El that there is no rush, when it comes to love

Part 1 of Mileven Week (Long Distance)

I Can Wait

Author's Note:

Welcome to Day 1 of Mileven week! Today's topic is long distance.

Enjoy!!

Happy Stranger Things Day!!

“Did Hop tell you about Will?” Mike asked El, while twirling the phone cord, around his fingers.

“About his second date with Troy? Yes,” El responded, while walking to the student center, cradling her phone, on her shoulder, while she adjusted her bookbag.

“I still can't believe it!” Mike laughed.

“Well, people change,” El said, “and Troy seems to really care for Will.”

“Give it about 10 more dates,” Mike joked, “then we can decide if he needs another lesson in potty training.”

“Mike!” El laughed, then whispered in her phone, “I told you that I’m not doing that again.”

“Yeah, I know,” Mike sighed.

Mike missed his beloved El, terribly. But, El was presented with a great opportunity, and after lengthy discussions and research, she decided to act upon it. Dr. Owens was now a fulltime psychology professor at George Washington University , in Washington D.C. The

psychology department heard about the deceased MKUltra program, and decided to conduct research, regarding how the patients, like El, were affected, psychologically. In cooperation with the research program, the former patients were offered a full scholarship, as part of the compensation, for what all they've been through. Dr. Owens didn't think anyone would want to participate, fearing the former patients would have PTSD, regarding the lab and the evasive experiments. Turns out, Dr. Owens and his research assistants, received inquiries from over 50 former MKUltra patients, all interested in the research program. Some participants were as young as El's age (18) while others were as old as 40. All came together with one common goal: closure. Once the research is complete, Dr. Owens plans to present his findings to the United States Senate, where they will vote to banish any further inhuman programs, that resemble MKUltra.

El was the first to volunteer, much to Hopper and Mike's surprise. Her reason was simple, she wanted a college education. After much discussion, Hopper agreed on two conditions: she remain on campus, during the whole program, and that Mike join her Spring semester, when she would officially begin her coursework. Mike applied to the university and obviously got accepted, and would officially start in the spring. Mike, Hopper, and El all agreed that Mike being there, while the research program was in progress, may affect variables in El's case. She wanted to provide a true profile and accurate results, so Mike would obviously be a distraction. With a heavy heart and many tears shed, Mike stayed behind in Hawkins, taking his gen ed courses at a local community college.

Even though they would only be apart for fall semester, the distance was extremely difficult.

"I miss you," Mike said softly.

"I miss you, too," El smiled.

“Only two weeks until Thanksgiving break,” Mike continued, “I can’t wait to see you.”

“I know,” El sighed, “I can’t wait to snuggle in your arms.”

“I expect we will be doing more than snuggling,” Mike said in a low tone.

El bit her bottom lip, “And how will we do that, with Joyce and Hopper clinging to us like glue?”

“Oh, I’ll find a way,” Mike smiled.

“I’m sure you will,” El laughed.

As El was still chatting, with her hormonal boyfriend, she unlocked her student PO Box, and noticed a package notification slip.

“Mike” El said happily “I got a package!”

“Oh did you?” Mike said, in a song-song voice. El caught on...

“Mike,” she said, “what did you send?”

“Who....me?” Mike joked.

“MIKE!”

“Ok, ok! Just open the box and see. I need to go to work. I’ll call you tonight.”

"Mike, you better tell me what you--"

"Love you!" Mike teased and ended the call. El giggled, but was anxious. She took the slip to the counter, where the postal worker provided her with a small package, wrapped in brown paper. El hurried back to her dorm room, dropped her bag on the floor, and grabbed scissors from her desk. El cut the string and unwrapped the brown paper, which fell to the floor. It was a cardboard box, which she opened. Inside was a bag of her favorite cherry candies and a smaller, more metallic looking box. She picked up the metallic box and opened it. As she did, El gasped in shock. Inside was a beautiful silver watch, with pink rhinestones around the face. El clasped the watch on her tiny wrist, the shiny gift sparkling in the sunlight, from her dorm window.

As El was crying tears of joy, she noticed a card in the box. El picked it up and opened the envelope, pulling out a white card with a golden retriever puppy, on the cover, holding a rose in his mouth, with "I Wuv You" printed across in purple letters. Of course Mike would pick the cutest and cheesiest card.

El opened the card and immediately recognized Mike's handwriting:

El,

I have a confession to make. Ever since we reunited, in 1984, I look at time differently. As a kid, I was always in a rush to go places, praying for classes to end faster, impatiently waiting for a movie to start, you get what I'm saying.

When you disappeared, with the demogorgan, that night at school, I waited for you. For 353 days, I called you, begging for you to come back. After a while, I became impatient...impatient that you wouldn't return my calls, impatient that I had to wait, but I knew in my heart, that you would

return. I wanted you to return quickly. I admit, I was selfish. Hopper was just trying to keep you safe, and I understand that now. You needed time to heal, and I needed to wait.

When you returned, my life was whole again. But I no longer want time to speed up, I want time to slow down, so I can enjoy time with you .

This watch is more than a gift for you, it symbolizes time. We have all the time in the world, to be together. We were apart for 353 days, so what's a few more weeks? You got this. I'm so proud of you! I hope that when we do start college, in the spring, that I will be able to keep up with you, since you carry so much more knowledge than I do. You are changing the world. Please know, not only do I love you with my whole heart and fiber in my being, but I look up to you. You carry strength, even though you are still my gentle flower.

I love you, El. I'll wait right here, until you get home.

*XOXO,
Mike.*

El took the card and sat on her bed, looking out the window. As she watched other students lounge around outside, she noticed a girl running across the lawn, books in hand and rushing to be somewhere. El chuckled to herself. She then opened the window and jokingly yelled at the girl.

"Slow down!" El called out to her, "Whoever you're meeting can wait. It's not the end of the world."